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HINTS FOR A CATECHISM OF COMMERCE.

QUESTION.—What is commerce?

ANSWER.—Commerce is a system of devices by which I am enabled, without personal risk, to transfer the property of my neighbour to my own possession.

Q.—What is cotton?

A.—Cotton is a compound of all sorts of fibrous matter, paving-stones, brickbats, "tares," odds and ends, and "raw material."

Q.—What is yarn?

A.—Yarn is an extract of cotton, with the addition of clay, soap, flour, water, and other articles too numerous to mention.

Q.—What is cloth?

A.—Cloth is the form in which the above interesting article is offered as wearing apparel to the various nations that are blest by commercial relations with this great "Centre of Industry."

Q.—What is a manufacturer?

A.—Anyone who has sufficient chemical knowledge to enable him to produce cloth.

Q.—What is a shipper?

A.—A shipper is one whose occupation is to induce the public to cast their bread (*i. e.*, their flour, water, and raw material) upon the waters, and who makes little or no charge for his trouble, on the principle that the *quantity* is sure to pay in the end.

Q.—What is an agent?

A.—An agent is a pawnbroker without a license.

Q.—What is a banker?

A.—A banker is the enemy with whom I am engaged in a perpetual struggle as to whether I shall "transfer" his property, or he mine.

Q.—What is your first duty as a child of commerce?

A.—My duty towards myself.

Q.—What qualities should you chiefly cultivate?

A.—The faculty of being overbearing or abject, as occasion may require, a complete incapability of being insulted, and a general elasticity of conscience.

Q.—Do you believe in "cash terms?"

A.—Yes, as I am thereby enabled to avoid my just engagements, and thus to "transfer" a portion of my neighbour's property in the way of interest.

Q.—Do you believe in "filled" goods?

A.—Most decidedly, as by them I am enabled, directly or indirectly, to sell to the unsuspecting nigger a large quantity of worthless material at the price of cloth. It is true that the nigger eventually finds me out, and does not form a very high opinion of me; but, in the meantime, I am enabled to "transfer" a portion of his property.

Q.—Do you believe in joint stock companies (limited)?

A.—Yes—as a promoter *only*.

Q.—Do you believe in accommodation bills?

A.—Implicitly, as the system enables me to trade on my neighbour's capital, and in case of a disaster, the "transfer," if not in my own favour, cannot possibly be in anyone else's.

Q.—Having enumerated the cardinal points of your commercial faith, will you now oblige me by naming any matters that strike you as being unworthy of your belief?

A.—Speaking generally, I don't believe in anything that is not calculated in some way to effect a "transfer" in my favour. Among such I may mention the adornments and politenesses of life, the new Bankruptcy Act, the Liverpool cotton reports, the Chamber of Commerce, "reciprocity," and the Œcumenical Council.

A MORNING AMONG THE RABBITS.

A BRIGHT frosty morning, and a keen bracing air; on the ground the merest sprinkling of snow. The fields and roads not frozen hard yet, but thinly crusted over with the frost. Scene, a farmhouse in Limeshire, equalled by no other county for beauty or fertility. Dramatis personæ, two youths, one town bred, the other country born, both on this particular morning yawning and stretching in their lack of what to do. Tired of splitting logs, felling trees, riding, "ranging the fields to start a hare," but starting none, promenading the country for a shot at anything that may offer, but bagging nothing, they smoke their piece of pipe, long for a return of the skating, and wonder what they may do. Suddenly a well-known image—how or why is a mystery—strikes on the mind of one, and he asks his town bred friend whether he has ever seen any "rabbiting." No, he has not, at least in the country. "We'll send for old Daniel Brown to come at once with his ferrets and dogs, and we may get a little 'sport,' and some rabbits, and mayhap a hare or two on the sly. At once we went in search of Dan'l. He was soon found, in the warmest corner of the village public, making to himself friends of the beer of unrighteousness and a cutty. "Rats or rabbits?" he asks, with a twinkle of the eye which radiates through all his weather-reddened face. "Rabbits," we say; and, almost at the moment, in comes his son, with dogs, ferrets, lines, and spade, which Dan'l transfers to himself, and we at once return to the farm.

"A cheery old, beery old, leary old" customer—to quote one of our local poets—is Dan'l. He is the best ratcatcher for miles round, and a good rabbiter. He is enthusiastic over his calling, and enjoys it keenly. A powerful, heavy-set man he is, with a small head that reminds one of a snake or weasel. His nose, in one of his many youthful fights, has been rendered eccentric. His son is gloomy and taciturn, dogged and powerful, a dangerous fellow to have a tussle with, but one who does his day's work well. Strange adventures by copse and field, no doubt, could they both narrate. But here we are with our guns at Hazel Bridge Bottom, and higher up, near the little wood yonder in Three Acre Meadows, where the hedges are thick and well-bank'd, are, or used to be, scores of the farmer's little brown foes. Already the dogs are at work scouring the hedge sides. These dogs are as clever and curious characters in their ways as old Dan'l himself. They are all "lurchers," mongrel and homely, but supercaninely sagacious, and all evidently "up to the game" and as fond of it as their master. One is a small brown swift greyhound, with a strain of the terrier in it. Another is partly both these, with a large cross of the pointer added; and the third is a very mongrel terrier, great among the rats. "Look out," cries Dan'l, "keep that soide o' the hedge; you'll have a shot soon. Hey on, Floy." Floy and Bess are in and out the hedge, snuffing about everywhere, and beat the four sides of a field in no time. Suddenly Floy stops and begins scratching. We hurry to the spot and perceive a rabbit-hole. In an instant old Dan'l has his hand in a small sack and produces his ferret—a long, thin, wiry creature, a foot long and more, not unlike an elongated rat, with a long sharp nose and a body that will twist round in a hole, and might almost be wrapped round a stick like a bit of string. This is a white one, Dan'l approving of white ferrets more than of "fitchet-coloured 'uns." It has a small ring round its neck, to which is fastened a line, one end of which Dan'l holds in one hand. The ferret is soon in the hole, the dogs posting themselves expectantly, but coolly, at the various outlets, in the most natural and intelligent manner possible, but entirely unbidden. Out comes the ferret again. There are no rabbits there. Off go the dogs. "Hey on, Floy." "Whoot, Bess." Hallo! a yelp and a long squeal in the hedge, thirty yards off. We rush up. Bess has caught a fine rabbit, which Dan'l has secured. "Now, Mestur George, for a shot and a race." We get into the middle of the field, the rabbit is let loose; then the dogs are off. Bang! bang! "Eh, Mestur George, bad point, an' yo'd a noice shot, a good shot. Yo owt to ha' had it. Hey, bitch! hey, Floy!" shouts the old fellow delightedly, as we all bolt after the chase. We just see bunny double round a corner. A rustic boy, who might have stepped out of *Punch's* agricultural sketches, with his great shoes, round ventilatory cap, little smock, and pleased grin, shouts alternately "Hoor 'as't." "Hoor 'asna." Floy has just missed it; the rabbit having taken sanctuary in a hole in the hedge bank, where

the dogs are all excitedly scratching away as if they would themselves unearth it. The refuge is only temporary. The irresistible ferret is soon at work, and Dan'l's spade lets in daylight on the combat in the hole, and bunny is out of the frying pan of the ferret's teeth into the fire of Dan'l's clutches. Another race for life. The scared little animal is off. The usual "law" is given; the dogs slipped; but, flash, bang! and this time Floy lays at Dan'l's feet a dead trophy.

No delay. Quick as thought the dogs are off, and we follow leisurely. "Hey on, Floy! Whoot, Bess!" We are now at "Whitcroft" (wheat field): the hedges are thick and clumpy with holly and bushes. At the other side is the land of a neighbouring farmer, and it belongs to a different owner to that of ours, a hard austere Nabal of a man. Dan'l is now on the alert. His snake-like head is poked forward, his eye is screwed up, his smile is replaced by an eager suspicious look. As likely as not, in that hedge there is a hare. In a minute or two a yelp is heard; out starts a fine, long-eared "puss," and goes leaping and scudding along the field on our side the hedge, but its fate is sealed, a shot has brought it down instantaneously. Carefully, with a leary, sly look, does Dan'l stow it away in the bottom of the ferret bag, hoodwinking the rustic lad by a remark about "a rotten 'un." We shall not feel comfortable until that hare is jugged and disappears—for we have no licenses. But who cares for that just now? The air has exhilarated us, the excitement, slight as it may be considered, has given us a good flow of spirits, and we tramp off over the ploughed land—a team is just at work finishing off the ridges—in the direction of Cloughstake's, to the pastures there. We are just at the top of a rise that slopes up from the brook. It is a fine view that breaks away to the west, down a long wide valley, well wooded and watered, with farmsteads posted on the uplands, and the Turtle winding through, right along to the distant hills that bound the two counties, yon curious looking round one being Grange Cloud, that barricades the entrance to Turtledale, while northwards we look down on the parks, the woodvestured hills, and tall tower of the "Manor," beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole county. Even in this frosty, hazy weather, there is a luxuriance of fair scenery rolling and stretching away in every direction, uplands and valleys, meadows and ploughed lands, the copses and hedgerows being not yet eliminated by "high" farming. But here we are now, lower down, close by Elm Lane, nigh upon Dingley Green. The indefatigable dogs are at it still, and we have hit on the right place at last. For an hour or two, ferret, guns, dogs and ourselves, are busy. Races, chases, firing, and unearthing the bunnies—sometimes having to dig them out, sometimes they emerging from some other outlet to their ramificated burrow—keep up the excitement. On one occasion out started another hare, and scudded off through a field on Nabal's land. Inadvertently it was brought down by the town-bred youth, who, in his elation, would at once have leapt the hedge and secured the spoil, but was held back by old Dan'l, who advised that the spot be marked and the hare secured after dark. Sagacious old man! Suppose one of Nabal's keepers had been prowling about, attracted by the shots!

It was soon "wargin" on dinner-time, and we counted our spoils, eight couple of rabbits and two hares—at least two including the one left in the field. No so bad, that. As we turned into the garden out of the field, Dan'l stopped. "If there coom a bit o' snaow, and there was a mowan (moon), he cud get a good shot next mornin' tow-urds foor, by sittin' i' that 'ere pig-stoy for a bit, and waitin' till the rabbits coom acraoss the feigh-eeld and begun feigh-eedin' on them greigh-eens." We weighed his words well; but the prospect of sitting half an hour in a pig-sty among the snow, at four on a frosty morning, did not seem equipoised by the possible "sport" of popping off at some starved rabbits. In the house, the lurchers at once lay down to sleep before the fire; Dan'l grew chatty over a pint of home brewed, and regaled his ferret on bread and milk warm, its usual and best food, flesh being only allowed it on occasions.

So ended our morning among the rabbits. Its results were, a good appetite and thorough enjoyment of the fun. Besides, we had been doing a useful work—that of exterminating pests. Many a farmer is unable to grow a single green or cabbage in his garden owing to these little depredating marauders. Their forays take place in the early morning, which is much the best time for shooting them, unless the aid of a ferret is introduced.

[LIVING MEN OF LETTERS.]

MR. HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

THE Americans, who rightly or wrongly repudiate Aristocracy—or rather, since that word is ignorantly profaned and misused, a titled class, which is very different from the Aristoi—have an awkward habit of making their great men either judges, generals, or professors. "Professor" is a word of very modest meaning, warped from its real significance into something somewhat charlatanic. Professor Browne who cuts hair, Professor Challis who cuts out trousers scientifically, Professor Anderson who pretends to conjure and expose spirit-rapping with the agile awkwardness of a plethoric butcher, rise before one's mind as you say the word. They are humbugs, saltambanques, mere pailliasses, with raddled noses and painted faces, who do their jugglery in a miserable way, poor fools—but Professor Longfellow is a learned man, a scholar, a gentleman, and a true poet.

He does not look much like one as he walks near his home at Cambridge, U.S. He resembles a substantial English farmer. He is more English in his look than Tennyson, quite as much so as Browning. He has a cheery red face like a farmer, white hair falling about it in long locks; black eyebrows. Forcible lines and features adorn that face; there is more strong thought in it, and much less delicacy and womanliness in it, than one would have thought. And yet he is essentially a woman's poet.

He is easily understood, for instance, much more easily understood than even Tennyson or Swinburne. Longfellow's meaning lies on the surface. Is this a proof that he is not a poet? By no means. Browning has ruined himself by his involved no-meaning. We do not want a poet who thinks in knots, and though we love Browning and rate him at a much higher value than Longfellow, we are apart from him by the space of the wide heavens in thinking his serious bewilderment a beauty, You can read Longfellow softly, gently, and with a calm delight; he "sweetly creeps," as the Prince of Poets says, "into your study of imagination." You can't understand Browning unless he is wonderfully well read by a poet who *can* read, and then with emphasis and proper inflection you see the fine depths of the man. Like Rembrandt's pictures, his poems want a false and artificial light thrown on them. When Mr. William Shakespere was a young man, a scholar, not a master, he affected obscurity—for a purpose, too—in his sonnets, but his sublimities are all daylight. *He* is no blackly dark mine, no mammoth cave with twenty-inch stalactites, but whole Alps and Himalayas, a Monte Rosa or Pilatus in the sunshine of true Poetry. That poet who, like a cuttle fish, escapes from being caught by dirtying the water, is of essentially small mind—

> A man's best things are nearest him—
> Lie close about his feet.

And the best poetry is, like our English Prayer-book, "to be understanded of by the common people." Let us point to the admirable quotation just used, from Richard Monckton Milnes Lord Houghton—it is as good and as plain as the best Wordsworth.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow is an earnest man and a good worker. If half of his countrymen were as earnest as he, we should have had less "Bunkum" talked, and more sound sense. He was and is well educated, and is no doubt educating himself now. Born in February 1807, he entered Bowdoin College, New Brunswick, at the age of fourteen, graduated in honours at eighteen, and in 1825 was studying law with his father, but, offered the Professorship of Modern Languages in his college, he left home to prepare himself, by a three and a half years' travel in Europe—in France, Spain, Italy, Germany, England—and

this earnest work shows itself in his poems. *Le moyen d' y parvenir* with Henry W. Longfellow, oh Bohemian friend, who loafs in and out of New York drinking shops, is hard work—laying his brains to, and achieving what he undertakes. In 1829 Longfellow returned home and entered on his professorship. In 1835, on the death or resignation of Mr. G. Ticknor, Longfellow was offered the same post at Harvard College, Cambridge, and the poet again went abroad to cram, as it were, for his post. He then spent more than a year in Denmark, Sweden, Germany, and Switzerland, and in 1836 returned and settled at Cambridge, where he has since resided, save but for brief intervals of travel for the sake of his health. In 1842 he was again in Europe; in 1861 his wife perished by a dreadful death, that by fire; in 1869 Longfellow spent some time in Europe. This is all the personal history that we shall relate. He has been many years before the public as an author and as a poet. In 1833 he published his translation from the Spanish of the celebrated poem of *Don Jorge Manrique*, on the death of his father, together with an introductory essay on Spanish poetry; in 1835 his *Outre-Mer;* in 1839, *Hyperion*, a romance, and *Voices of the Night*, his first collection of poems; in 1841, *Ballads and other Poems;* in 1842, *Poems on Slavery;* in 1843, *The Spanish Student*, a play; in 1845, *The Poets and Poetry of Europe* and *The Belfry of Bruges;* in 1847, *Evangeline;* in 1848, *Kavanagh*, a tale; and in 1849, *The Sea-side and the Fire-side; The Golden Legend* in 1851; and *The Song of Hiawatha* in 1855; then came *Miles Standish* in 1858; *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, 1863; and, some two years ago, a translation from Dante, which was received but coldly. People had been accustomed to look for something peculiar, gentle, and entirely his own, from Longfellow. His Dante has not been a success, and yet we want something in the actual *terza rima* that will render Dante. Our very best translation at present is that by Cary, which is decidedly Miltonic. The Messrs. Cassells have very wisely printed that with the lurid and overrated illustrations of Gustave Doré, which, by the way, are about the best illustrations that *he* has ever done, excepting the weird pictures to Balzac's *Contes Drolatiques*.

No American author is so well known in England as Longfellow. Many of his verses have become household words, and many of them richly deserve to be so. Thus the last line in this extract is quoted by every young lady. It is from *Evangeline*:—

> Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted;
> If it enrich not the heart of another, its waters, returning
> Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill them full of refreshment.
> That which the fountain sends forth returns again to the fountain.
> Patience; accomplish thy labour; accomplish thy work of affection.
> Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient endurance is Godlike.

This sweet story is founded on a tale of "British" cruelty, by the way miserably magnified, and will perpetuate a good deal of poetic dislike to the English. Happily it is in a lilting Hexameter, a Greek and Latin measure which the learned Southey was, before Longfellow, silly enough to try to bring into use. Admirable, most admirable as it is in Homer, sweet and excellent as it is in Virgil and Lucretius, the Hexameter does not suit our tongue in any way. If it could have been naturalized Longfellow would have done it. The sweetest English Hexameters are those in *Evangeline*, where the devoted girl dies. "Still stands the forest primeval," they commence, and end with the picture of the two lovers lying at rest in the little churchyard in the heart of the city.

> Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them,
> Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and for ever,
> Thousands of aching brains, where theirs are no longer busy,
> Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labours,
> Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their labours.

In the earlier portraits of Longfellow, there is a dull melancholy imprinted on his face, and this is to be found in his poems. It is one cause of their popularity; it is the great proof of his own weakness. He has little of the strength of a kingly poet, little of that jovial merriment, that buoyant force of old Chapman or Daniel, let alone Shakespere and Homer. These poets are, to use a vulgar provincialism, "all alive like a bag of fleas;" so is Burns, so is Beranger, so is Dante, even in his fiery hatred and damnable revenge. Longfellow, on the other hand, is as melancholy as a yellow and green sick school-miss. Even in 1840, when he was but a young man, we see this, in his *Voices of the Night*, and even in the *Psalm of Life*, which is so often quoted and recited, there is a damnable iteration of that vile melancholy which destroys all energy.

> Art is long and time is fleeting,
> And our hearts, though strong and brave,
> Still like muffled drums are beating
> Funeral marches to the grave.

And this pervades the poet. Even in the earlier poems, all written before the age of nineteen, "some of which," says the writer quaintly and naively, "have found their way into schools, and seem to be successful," there are traces of this weak passion, and in almost his last verses we find the same fault, and we may well be angry with a poet for thus dashing his singing robes with tears. We have a great quarrel with him for his last verses in *Tales of a Wayside Inn* (Weariness), which are yet very beautiful. They commence with "O little feet, that such long years, Must wander on through hopes and fears," and they end with this verse:

> O little souls! as pure and white
> And crystalline as rays of light,
> Direct from Heaven their source divine;
> Refracted through the mist of years,
> How red my setting sun appears,
> How lurid looks this soul of mine.

This is not Christian doctrine. Pure and white are pretty adjectives, but a father ought to know that there is as much possible wickedness and actual selfishness in a child as ever there is in a true old poet. But this affectation—or possibly a true humility—is also to be found in Hood, a much healthier poet mentally, but one who suffered from ill health bodily.

Longfellow's translations are capital. They are from many languages, and they are all quaint and good. Look, for instance, at that capital sonnet from Lope de Vega—"To-morrow"—

> Lord, what am I, that with unceasing care
> Thou didst seek after me—that thou didst wait,
> Wet with unhealthy dews, &c.

which is worthy of all praise. Read also, with much gusto, many of his Danish and Swedish pieces. That he loves the old land, and truly, is proved by many little touches; notably by his writing the very best verses, save Tennyson's, ever written about a man who in years to come will grow into a hero, the Duke of Wellington. The poem is called "The Warden of the Cinque Ports," and was published in the *Atlantic Monthly* shortly after the Great Duke's death. So, also, we might cite those beautiful verses on the poor dying soldier in the hospital at Scutari, kissing the shadow of Santa Filomena (Miss Nightingale) as it fell upon the wall at his bedside. Thé story is a poem of itself, but Longfellow, raised, as he said, to a "higher level" by the deeds in the Crimea, does not hesitate to prophecy that the light of the deed shall last

> On England's annals, through the long
> Hereafter of her speech and song,
> That light its rays shall cast
> From portals of the past.

So also to be perfectly national—and a good poet must be national—in the midst of the war with the South—when will a poet arise to sing the heroic bravery of that small unaided people—Longfellow prophesied the victory of the North. The Northern sloop, the Cumberland, was run down in Hampton Roads, by an iron Southern vessel, and the men, 'tis said, went down with a cheer, whereon Longfellow sings out—

Ho! brave hearts that went down in the seas!
Ye are at peace in the troubled stream.
Ho! brave land with hearts like these,
Thy flag that was rent in twain,
Shall be one again,
And without a seam!

We have run on so far, and could keep on for three or four pages more, our subject is so fertile, when we remember how small our space is. We have said nothing about the three best or most ambitious poems of Longfellow, one—a kind of *Faust*—the *Golden Legend*, we admire very much. The opening is admirable, but yet it is but wine and water to Bailey's *Festus*, to say nothing of Goethe's *Faust*. The second is *Hiawatha*, and the third *Miles Standish*. One is to be, it is said, the Epic of America, the other of New England. Neither will live except as curiosities. *Hiawatha* is written in smooth iambics, very easily to be imitated, and thus they run—

* * * *

As unto the bow the cord is,
So the man is to the woman;
Though she bends him she obeys him,
Though she draws him yet she follows,
Useless each without the other.

Thus the youthful Hiawatha
Said within himself and pondered,
Much perplexed with various feelings—
Listless, longing, hoping, fearing,
Dreaming still of Minnehaha,
Of the lovely laughing water
In the land of the Dacotahs.

This, as Touchstone says, is the "right butter woman's rank to market." One could rhyme to it a whole summer's day. Epics are not made like that. Besides the subject of the loves of a red man and his squaw, who can be no ancestors to anybody, who were the most cruel, brutal, and degraded of races, are hardly hero and heroine for the supreme race Caucasian. *Miles Standish* is very weak, and in Hexameters, and that disposes of *that* being an Epic.

But nothing will dispose of our gratitude to a sweet, good, and learned poet; one who has honoured his country and honoured his race; who has never written one word which dying he could wish to blot; whose book, like a circumambient and omnipresent fairy, has entered thousands upon thousands of American and English homes, and has never entered one without bringing with it purity and pleasure.

TOWN TALK,

AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

THE MANCHESTER ARTISTS.

THE Manchester Academy of Art will hold its annual exhibition of paintings, drawings, and sketches, at the Royal Institution, next week. There will be a conversazione as usual, on Tuesday evening—a sort of private view, for which invitations will be issued by the committee—and the exhibition will be open to the public during the remaining days of the week. The hangers this year are Mr. Alfred Darbyshire and Mr. William Morton. From the works already received and promised, the collection is likely to prove a most interesting one. At the Dudley Gallery, now open in London, our local artists are well represented. Their contributions are as follows:—Threatening Weather, by Joseph Adshead; Study by the Seashore, Edward Binyon; Refreshments, Anne Crozier; A Road in Cumberland, and A Towyn Mussel Girl, George Hayes; the Ormes Head, Llandudno, H. J. Holding; Sunset, Ben Nevis, and Evening on the Thames, C. E. Johnson; A Breton Woodman, and Breton Peasants, Joseph Knight; A Mill Stream, and In a Garden, L. C. Livett; Toilers of the Sea: Conway Pearl Fishery, A. H. Marsh; Mending his Net, and Waiting for Help, H. Measham; A Wintry Torrent in Westmorland, Charles Potter; and the Lady of Lochroyan, Cyrus Vernon. Mr. Potter's Wintry Torrent was in the last Manchester Exhibition; the others, we believe, have not been exhibited here.

"FORMOSA" AT THE AMPHITHEATRE.

Have we rightly fathomed the mystery of that stage sphinx, Mr. Dion Boucicault, in coming to the conclusion, after yawning through *Formosa*, that in it he has been mockingly gauging the capacity of the Cockneys for swallowing improbabilities, and the length to which he can carry dramatic incongruities? If not, we are driven to the verdict forced upon us by *After Dark*, that absence of meaning is his dramatic ideal. The production of *Formosa* at the Amphitheatre, recently licensed for stage plays, seems to illustrate the theory of "natural selection." On Saturday, the opening night, the dingy circus was filled from garret to basement, chiefly with boys and men, and beyond the veto on smoking, looks as it always did, but feels horribly cold and draughty. The gallery, with whistlings and yells, realized Byron's "hell of waters where they howl and hiss!" As was to be expected, the dreariness of *Formosa* excited no enthusiasm. It fell vapid and flat. What ought to have been a procession of climacteric tableaux, and a scene-painter's triumphal march, was more like a series of fiascos. The scenery, instead of bringing down the house, brought on one occasion a great lump of itself down with a whirr and a clash, nearly to the annihilation of Mrs. Egan and a young lady, and to the partial extinction of the footlights. It was almost a "striking hit." The curtain had a knack of rising unexpectedly, before the stage servants had finished arranging the properties, an effect sorely disillusionizing. The dreariness and literary worthlessness of the piece are simply indescribable. The fun is pantomimic, and generally at the expense of policemen. The thrilling tableaux were received with peals of laughter, and the climax and great moving incident of the play almost shook the assembled crowd to pieces with mirth. The storming of the spunging-house was a bit of the poorest pantomime ever attempted on any stage; the boat race, to the indignation of the audience, was hidden from view by the small fry of stage carpenters, but the boats went in jerks, like the Theatre Royal railway train. Both crews, *immediately after passing Barnes Bridge*, rushed on the stage fresh as paint, and without having turned a hair! At the finish, the audience rose *en masse*, turned away, and went home without the ghost of a cheer. No one was called before the curtain. The setting, acting, dressing, general *mise-en-scène* and reception of *Formosa* were in every way worthy of its own intrinsic worthlessness. It is a gigantic farce, funereal, and almost down to the level of a Cockney intellect. The moral of the piece? The moral is conspicuous by its absence. N.B. No admittance behind the scenes.

PUBLIC HOUSES AND THE SALE OF LIQUOR.

Mr. Bruce, the Home Secretary, will within a few days bring a bill into Parliament, in fulfilment of the pledge given in the Queen's speech, to "undertake the amendment of the law which regulates the grant of licenses for the sale of fermented and spirituous liquors." We are informed that the bill will contain clauses which will empower the licensing authorities to close all public houses at ten o'clock p.m. on Saturdays, at eleven o'clock on other nights, with the exception of Sundays, when the hours at which they are at present open will be much curtailed. Public houses will also be required to open at a much later hour in the morning than the present regulation of four a.m. Whether there will be any attempts to get over the "travelling" difficulty, we cannot say, but we understand that the bill will make an effort to deal with the adulteration of liquors, which is really the most serious part of the existing evil.

DOMESTIC SERVANTS.

We are happy to observe a letter in the papers of the week upon the grievances of domestic servants. We are all of us accustomed to the

ceaseless complaints of mistresses, which are everlastingly being dinned into our ears. Nobody doubts that mistresses have much cause to complain, but we are certain that servants have much more. We cannot conceive a more abject position than that of a domestic servant. From early morning to late night, her labours never end. And all the time she is under the eagle eye—not of a master: which would be bad enough—but of a mistress: which is more than flesh can bear. On the caprices of a woman dressed in a little brief authority, her comfort is dependent altogether. And how intolerable those caprices are, and the petty tyranny with which they are enforced, can easily be imagined. We all know how virtuously censured is every five minutes at the back door, and how curiously the beef that went down from dinner is examined when it comes up again for supper, and what mean remarks are often passed upon the difference that may be perceptible in its dimensions. And what is the pay for this? A dozen or so pounds a year—an alternate Sunday out—and one week-day afternoon a month! Eighteen hours' liberty a month, for reasonable human beings under the Queen's peace, and England a free country!

THE SIMULTANEOUS COLLECTIONS.

The sum received on Sunday last at the various churches, chapels, synagogues, and meeting houses, in aid of the medical charities, amounted to over £4,000. At the entrance of several places of worship papers were distributed in which contributors might wrap up their contribution, specifying to what particular charity they wished their offering to be applied. This did away with much of the objection which was fairly to be taken to the scheme upon the score of its unconstitutional organization. We hope that in future years, however, the organization will be amended: in which event we are convinced the result of the movement will be more successful even than it was on this occasion. Now that the public have subscribed so liberally to its funds, it would only be a gracious act upon the part of the Infirmary authorities to satisfy the public as to the rumour which is flying about, that they are building upon land which was solemnly and for valuable consideration covenanted to be left for ever vacant. It is due from the Infirmary that some information upon this point should be given.

THE BILLIARD CHAMPIONS IN MANCHESTER.

On Tuesday, the twenty-ninth of March, there will be two exhibition matches between Cook, the present billiard champion, and John Roberts, the former champion of England. The Assembly Room at the Free Trade Hall has been engaged for the occasion, and it is intended to have one match (at which ladies will be present) commencing at three o'clock, and the other at eight. The two champions play at evens, as in the late tournament at St. James's Hall, London; and opinions are very much divided as to the result. Since Roberts and Starke, the American, played their famous matches at the Athenæum, years ago, there has not been an opportunity in Manchester of witnessing a game of billiards between players who have contested the championship, and never has there been a match here in which both players have been, each in his day, champion of the world. The game will be played on one of Orme's tables, which will, we believe, be constructed on the old design, and not with smaller pockets or altered position of the spot. Since the match for the championship, popular opinion seems to be in favour of a return to the old conditions, and players generally pronounce the alterations a mistake. Cook appears to be playing better than ever. At Aylesbury he played Dufton, on Friday evening last, and succeeded in making 417 in a break. This is the largest he has ever made, and it exceeds the largest break of any other player by seventy-one points. Should he play in his best style in the Free Trade Hall match, and should Roberts have a fair share of luck in addition to his splendid execution, a brilliant game will be witnessed.

THE FUTURE OF OUR GRAMMAR SCHOOLS.

There are fifty-eight grammar schools in Lancashire. Although under the operation of the Endowed Schools Act, all these will be subjected, at no very distant date, to important internal and administrative changes, we have not heard of preparations in any one town for the inevitable visit of the Commissioners. As the act gives considerable powers to the public, it is eminently desirable that the settlement of the matter should not be left entirely to these gentlemen, as it must be unless the inhabitants take the initiative. In view of the impending changes, a special meeting of the Manchester Literary Club was held this week, to consider the subject in its various aspects. This society, it may be stated parenthetically, is almost a county institution, as it numbers amongst its members gentlemen connected with literature, art, and education, in all parts of Lancashire and the borders. A long and interesting discussion showed a complete unanimity of opinion on the following points:—The necessity for the abolition of vested interests; a freer interpretation of the terms of the endowments, so as to adapt the schools to modern requirements; the prohibition of anything like sectarian tests, or the teaching of peculiar religious dogmas; the attachment to each foundation of a certain number of free scholars, according to the monetary value of each endowment, the free pupils to be drafted from the elementary National Schools as rewards for industry and proficiency; the head-masterships, in all cases, to be open to laymen as well as clergymen; and the government of all grammar schools to be placed in the hands of trustees who shall, in part at least, be elected by town councils or other representative bodies.

[LOCAL ART TREASURES.]

PORTRAITS AT THE PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

IS it not matter for wonder that so few works of art are to be found upon the walls of our public institutions? If for nothing else, they would serve a decorative purpose, and yet their claims even on this somewhat subordinate ground are almost entirely neglected. We have made a careful survey of the leading places of public resort, and the result of our enquiries is assuredly not satisfactory, as we now proceed to show. Five of our chief institutions we found possessed of portraits, namely, the Athenæum, the Royal Exchange, the Infirmary, the Mechanics' Institution, and the Literary and Philosophical Society. Most of these portraits are of a low order of merit, and in some cases of the very lowest; though that cannot be said to matter much, for no interest seems to be taken in them, and except where the full description is printed on the frame, it is wonderful how difficult it is to find out not only the name of the artist, which many times may well be forgotten, but even the subject and donor. Where such indifference is shown, there is no encouragement to make presentations, and it is not surprising that these institutions possess few pictures, and those of but slight merit. The portraits in the Royal Infirmary are eight in number:

SUBJECT.	ARTIST.	DONORS.
Dauntsey Hulme.	J. Lonsdale.	
James Massey (first President)	William Tate.	W. Tate.
James C. Harter (Treasurer)	Sir J. Watson Gordon, R.A.	Subscribers.
Robert Thorp, F.R.C.S.	Unknown.	James Hatton.
Hy. [Worrall (Treasurer 1786-92)	Ditto.	Unknown.
William Yates.	Ditto.	Ditto.
Dauntsey Hulme (?)	Ditto.	Ditto.
Unknown	Ditto.	Ditto.

This is a melancholy list—one of the subjects unknown, another doubtful; the givers of four of the works unrecorded, the artists of five unknown. Artistically, the picture of Mr. J. C. Harter, by Sir Watson Gordon, the late president of the Royal Scottish Academy, is the best of the collection; the colour is unambitious and therefore harmonious, the head strongly drawn, and the attitude agreeable and easy. Mr. Massey's portrait by Tate is good as far as drawing is concerned, and was no doubt a likeness, but the colour is unpleasant, and the painting heavy and coarse. Lonsdale's head of Dauntsey Hulme is a very vigorous picture, well composed, and characteristic; but here again the colour is bad, black, and uninteresting. It is not necessary to notice in detail the others, which are of the most conventional type of portraiture. They are seldom absolutely ill drawn, and, being low in tone and unambitious, they are never startlingly offensive in colour, nor do they exhibit any efforts after refinement or beauty of any kind. They are simply mediocre.

The Athenæum has seven portraits, all subscribed for and presented by the members:—

SUBJECT.	ARTIST.	DONORS.
James Heywood, M.P., F.R.S	Unknown	Subscribers.
Sir Elkanah Armitage	Ditto	Ditto.
Ed. T. Bellhouse	Ditto	Ditto.
Samuel Ogden	P. Hoyoll	Ditto.
W. Gilbert Ginty	P. Hoyoll	Ditto.
J. Ashton Nicholls	W. Percy	Ditto.
Richard Cobden, M.P.	W. Percy	Ditto.

The first two gentlemen and Mr. Cobden were among the founders of the institution, Mr. Heywood and Sir Elkanah Armitage acting as presidents for many years. The other four rendered valuable services as directors. Of the seven portraits, the two last by Mr. Percy are the only ones deserving of notice. They are both posthumous likenesses, and the difficulties inevitable in such work are most successfully overcome. That of Mr. Cobden is in every way satisfactory. The remaining six cannot really be criticized with pleasure. Like the great run of portraits in Manchester at present, they are eminently unartistic.

At the Mechanics' Institution are three pictures, viz.:—Sir Benjamin Heywood, first president of the institution, painted by W. Bradley; John Davis, painted by Reynolds; and a portrait of the first Napoleon in his Emperor's robes. Mr. Bradley's picture is, like all his, above the average order of merit, though in this case the attitude is slightly theatrical. It is placed in so dark a corner that it would be unfair to speak of it as to colour. The portrait of Mr. Davis is better placed, and is effective and strong, but rather black. As to the "Napoleon," about which we can obtain no information, it is simply bad.

The Literary and Philosophical Society possesses the following works:—Dr. Dalton, by Allen; Peter Clare, by William Bradley; Dr. Thomas Henry, by Allen; Dr. Holme, by Scott; Sir Humphrey Davy, a copy of a picture in the Royal Society; Dr. Joule, by George Patten, R.A.; and Sir Isaac Newton, a copy from a picture in the possession of the Royal Society. It is a relief to be able at last to speak in terms of praise of a portrait, after noticing so many that are almost worthless. Allen's likeness of Dr. Henry is in every way admirable. The composition is excellent, the drawing firm and correct, and the colour powerful and well managed. Much the same may be said of Scott's picture of Dr. Holme, but it is not so entirely successful. Allen's Dr. Dalton is clever; so is Peter Clare, by Bradley; and Mr. Patten's picture also deserves praise, though his execution is not nearly so good as either Allen's or Bradley's. The two copies are much less valuable; that of Sir Humphrey Davy is unartistic in treatment, and that of Sir Isaac Newton brown in colour, and of a leathery quality that is disagreeable.

Only two portraits are to be found at the Exchange. One, Colonel Thomas Stanley, M.P., painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., was presented by Thomas Johnson and James Ackers to the merchants of Manchester, and, according to the inscription, "is placed here as a testimony of public regard for the ability with which he has uniformly promoted the commercial interests of this town during eight successive parliaments." The other, a likeness of Sir Richard Arkwright, Knt., painted for Josiah Wedgwood by "Wright of Derby," was presented to the committee by Edmund Buckley, M.P., in 1858. Both these portraits are good, but whether it be want of varnish, or cleaning, or the light in which it is hung, it is difficult to see if Sir Thomas's work is as great as his reputation would lead us naturally to expect.

As a result of an inspection of these pictures, we come to two conclusions: first, that the persons who had to choose the artists were, with a few exceptions, incompetent to perform that task; secondly, that those to whom the pictures have been given don't care much about them. It is certain that had professional advice been taken when most of these portraits were to be painted, Manchester would have been spared many unworthy paintings, and would now own noble works of art that might be shown without shame, and would become most valuable as in the course of years the interest in the subjects themselves increased. As to the carelessness of the possessors with regard to their property, that is hard to understand. Surely they have some voice in the matter, and, if not consulted in the first instance, could refuse any offering they thought undesirable or unworthy. No delicacy about refusing a gift ought to stand in the way of their declining donations which, if they do not absolutely demoralize, at least create an indifference most highly injurious to the welfare and increase of true art amongst us. On the other hand, if these unfortunate pictures are approved of by their proprietors, how is it that they are so utterly neglected? It will be seen in how many cases there has been no way of finding names, let alone dates, connected with these pictures. Curiosity alone, one would think, would have induced those whose property they are to know something about them. As it is, we can only suppose that they were offered; disliked, but accepted; and forgotten as soon as possible.

THE BOLD 'BUS DRIVER.

A PROSPECTIVE RETROSPECT.

COME ye, who ride on tramways: a story you shall hear;
'Tis of a brave 'bus driver and a noutside passengeer.
Thus spoke the outside passengeer—"Oh! driver, tell to me
If there be fear of accident or mortal injuree.

"I am insured in the *Sphinx*, my premium's paid in full,
But I would rather walk than risk a fracture of the skull;
I have some business in the town, but I shall be full soon
If I get there at all before to-morrow afternoon."

The driver smiled to calm his fears, and thus he made reply;—
"Go ask my proper-rioters the charactar of I;
Though reared a pet, I never yet was skeered since early youth."
"You looks," observed the passengeer, "as if you spoke the truth."

"Wo-ho!" the brave 'bus driver cried, "my fiery, foaming tits,
I see some rivals on the road—we'll lick 'em into fits:
Behold a milk, and water cart, likewise a load of hay,
Our time is up—and something more—away, my steeds, away!

"And fear you not my passengeer, my prowess I will prove,
So swiftly we shall speed along you'll almost seem to move;
By pals upon the road I'm named Bill Blazeaway the bold,
And I my reputation most firmly will uphold.

"Survey these splendid animals. That wall-eyed little mare
Can do her mile-an-half a hour and scarcely turn a hair;
And Tressles, tho' he's in the shafts to make him keep his feet,
Is thoroughbred—what's left of him—and very hard to beat.

"An' tho' my off-side 'oss is not cut out for empty show,
A hundertaker trained him in the way he ought to go;
Observe with what intelligence they shakes their tails and ears.
Come up! My beauteous steeds—come hup! and, sir, abate your fears;

"You're all serene—believe my words—on them you may rely,
An unregenerate fabulist* I'd soon shove in the eye."
The driver thus addressed his fare, thus cheered his timid soul,
Meanwhile his steeds impetuously sped onward to their goal.

They passed the load of hay three times; they passed the milkman four,
Then left him chatting at a gate and saw him never more;
The water cart went dribbling on at a tremendous pace,
But prematurely turned again, and thus gave up the race.

"Oh! Mister William Blazeaway," the passengeer exclaimed,
"By good Sir Joseph Heron† you most surely will be blamed;
What is this joggling feeling—whence comes that rumbling sound?"
The bold 'bus driver said, "that are the wheels a turning round."

Again the passengeer outspake, "Oh! driver, set me down,
Or I shall have a vertigo before we get to town;
For speed my utmost limit is the 'limited express;'
This rapid locomotion does my feeble nerves distress.

"I'll walk the rest and wait for you in busy Market Street,
Where, if you so will honour me, I gaily will stand treat."
"All right," said Bill Then off to town the passengeer did steer,
But he caught a cold whilst waiting for to stand bold William's beer.

Ten years have passed and gone since this unprecedented drive,
The passengeer is also gone—but William is alive!
Poor William, like all geniuses, was much misunderstood:
One Headlam fined him thrice, and said 'twas for the public good.

They fined him off the road, but you may always find him where
He keeps "The Old 'Bus," in a street without a thoroughfare;
There William hears his patrons tell of "underground", and "tram,"
But William knoweth what he knows, and only utters "——."‡

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* We cannot find this epithet in the *Slang Dictionary*.—ED.

† The Earl of Woodhead was only plain Sir Joseph in 1870.—ED.

‡ Please, the compositor says this word is flam, and I say it's —— not. We can't make it out, and the poet is tight and says—"Find it out."—P. D.

THE DIVORCE CASE.

WE are not going to emulate the conduct of the majority of papers of the day, by writing about this trial a column of lamentation that it should be written about at all. We have from the first been of opinion that it is of benefit to the community that cases of this sort should be both reported and discussed. We have not the slightest sympathy with the many who have lately been reviving the exploded idea of holding trials with closed doors, as we have not the slightest sympathy with the generality of those who go within the open doors of the Divorce Court. It is an education of the mind, to some extent, to notice now and then the number and character of the frequenters of that court; and observation of the sex of many of them makes one somewhat sceptical as to the good judgment of the poets in making women their ideal of purity. But we maintain that such injury as is done to these by what they see and hear, and to the general public by what they read, is as nothing compared to the good which is to be derived by those who go into that court and those who read of its proceedings. One is surprised to find so many sensible newspapers and people taking it almost for granted that such exhibitions as the recent one are a bane to public morality. We much fear that public morality is very little affected either for good or for evil by these revelations, or indeed by anything: it is a pretty constant quantity: but we are convinced that the tendency of them, upon the whole, is for its benefit. Such a case as the one which is just now in everybody's mind, acts, as the *Telegraph* observes, like a moral thunderstorm. It clears the atmosphere of public opinion. It brings people back from social sophistries and polite euphemisms to an original sense of right and wrong. It shows them how far the excessive courtesies of social intercourse have led them from the moral law which, in their hours of cool judgment, they have laid down. It impresses vividly upon them the fundamental fact that wrong is wrong, call it what you may, wink at it if you will. Whether this refreshed belief in right has any good effect in inducing men to do right, or whether it has not, its tendency is that way, and it is a wholesome thing. We question whether for a long time the fashionable fribbles of society have had the fact of their contemptible frivolity and folly made so patent to their minds. Whether or not they will profit by it, that alone is good. Above all, a trial such as this, is incalculably useful, inasmuch as it thunders once more into men's ears the eternal truth they are so deaf to hear, and having heard so ready to forget and to deny—that poor humanity is pitiably weak, and much of life a very miserable thing. This is truth; and until truth is learnt, nothing can be done. Upon the principle of truth the world is built, and no reforms can be effectual, no improvements secure, unless they have truth for their base.

Holding these opinions, we believe that the more a case like this is published and discussed, the better is it for society; and we consider that the wholesomeness of so wide a dissemination of truth is the crowning reason, added to the hundred others, many of them technical, why the deeds of the Divorce Court should be chronicled. It is astonishing that this conspicuous and imperial reason should be so generally overlooked. It was not urged by the *Times* in justification of itself to Mr. Boucicault, in the *Formosa* controversy. The *Times* chose instead to shelter itself under the absurd plea that it expected domestic censorship to withhold such matter from young persons. Preposterous idea! But so the *Times* would have men bring their children up—taught to believe the world is what it is not, and is not what it is. So, the *Pall Mall* says—if what the press has recently been teeming with were fiction, it would have been suppressed. And very properly so: for it would have been unmitigated mischief. But doesn't the *Pall Mall* see, that the very reason why it is a good thing rather than a bad, is just that it is *not* fiction, but is fact? The illustration used by the *Pall Mall* against the publication of such matter, is the very one which we would use in favour of it. It is truth—bold, naked, ugly truth—telling us what a paltry thing is man, and what a frail one woman—proving to us what a superficial show is all this outside honour and politeness that we call the world—thrusting the fact upon us how repulsive much of human nature is—confounding the soft words and bated breath of sugarplum philosophers—and, not least, confirming the ostracised satirist and justifying slandered cynicism.

But there are other matters in connection with this case which ought to be remarked upon. The administration of English law has been upon its trial; and though it has not come out of it altogether unworthily, it has not come out of it so gloriously either. It is the fashion to extol this to the skies, if not considerably higher. No body of men so unimpeachable as our judges—no institution so impartial as our law—the same treatment for the small as for the great—and, what is most to the point—the same treatment for the great as for the small. We never could quite understand all this. No doubt our judges are as respectable a body of men as any other body—perhaps more so than most—but there is really no occasion for so much commotion. One or two of them are hardly exemplary private characters, several of them have done rather shady things when at the bar, and most of them are occasionally guilty of either anger, partiality, or nepotism. So with the law. It is, upon the whole, administered without respect to persons: but it is only a human institution; and humanity, we have been forcibly reminded by this very case, is very, very fallible. Now, according to strict right, and according to the reputation of the law, no difference whatever ought to have been made between the treatment of one person and another in the recent cause. But a difference *was* made. And when we find that the person in respect of whom that difference was made to be the Heir-Apparent to the Throne, we are driven to reflect upon the operation of that great Law of Coincidence which was discovered by one of the contributors to these pages. And the result of those reflections is not altogether pleasant in itself, or favourable to the administration of the law. The first unsatisfactory circumstance in the cause was the judicial intimation that the personage had better not be mentioned by his name, but indicated by a letter of the alphabet. "It was always possible that counsel might have been misinstructed." Feeble plea! And rather more improbable—indeed, ridiculous—in the only case to which it was applied than any other. In the next place, it was not a pleasant thing to hear the Judge—again, the Judge—suggesting that His Royal Highness's convenience should be consulted as to when he would be called: when nobody in court, except the Judge himself, had thought of calling him at all. Altogether, Baron Penzance displayed a fussiness about the Prince which was not worthy of a judicial representative of the Queen. Princes are great, but the Law is greater. The Law made them, and the Law can abolish them. After this, it was not so surprising as discomfiting to gather from the public prints that H.R.H. had been in personal conference with the Judge: surely, "a most improper proceeding." Only the other day the Chief Judge in Bankruptcy severely censured somebody for writing to him—but then somebody was nobody. Of course, it is quite impossible for anyone who is acquainted with the rigidly economical habits of the Prince of Wales to associate him with the Court of Bankruptcy; but if he could by any possibility be got there, it would be interesting to see how one of his effective letters would be treated. The evil influence of the highest rank upon high rank, however, in this case, is chiefly to be deplored inasmuch as it has, in some measure, stifled the full and free inquiry which would certainly have taken place if such high personages had not been involved in it. Everybody must feel that the bottom of the matter has not been reached. For the subtle influence which the Prince of Wales's connection with the case, and his appearance in the witness-box, has in all probability had upon the jury, the law of course is not responsible. But we put it to impartial minds whether, if anybody else had given evidence so damaging to the theory of sanity, Serjeant Ballantyne would not have cross-examined him. To attempt to prove a woman sane—to prove that she made a specific charge (for it was specific, argue as you may) against a specific person—to let that person explicitly deny that charge—and never cross-examine him! Such a course is hardly what the learned serjeant would have taken in the case of any other person, and is not the course he took with reference to the other witness similarly implicated. Also, in the summing-up, the mind of Lord Penzance appears to have been burdened with the idea that it lay upon him to endorse with his judicial imprimatur the denial of the Heir-Apparent to the Throne, and to exonerate him of the whole affair—surely the province of the jury, not the Judge. Altogether, though the law has not been guilty of the amount of flunkeyism that might easily have been imported into matters, we do not see that its conduct calls for special eulogy, still less for that glorification with which at least one newspaper has canonized it.

After Lord Penzance's summing up, it was next to impossible for the jury to return any other verdict than the one they did. Our judges are

getting more and more into the way of plainly indicating to the jury what their own opinions are—and very angry do they sometimes get upon the rare occasions when their sentiments are not adopted—witness Mr. Baron Martin, at last Liverpool Assizes. We are fast becoming of opinion that the reason why the Bench is so attached to Trial by Jury is because, without responsibility attaching to themselves, they find in juries ready tools to do their bidding. In the generally sound judgment of our judges we believe; but if their opinions are to be substituted for the jury's, let the jury be abolished altogether. Baron Penzance would not himself maintain that his summing-up of this case was an impartial statement of it for the decision of the jury. The opinion of the Judge was evident; and when in a trial nominally by a jury the opinion of the Judge is evident, that trial is unsatisfactory, whether the opinion in itself be right or wrong.

SKETCHES OF THE MANCHESTER TRADE.

ENTERING CLERKS.

THE Manchester Trade is, as most people are aware, a vast system of distribution of manufactures. Those who are engaged in it as employés may, for the most part, be ranged under two divisions—they who make transactions, and they who record them. Though both classes are essential, the first is accounted the most important, for the reason that the making of a transaction stands in relation to the recording of it as cause to effect. Clerks, as a rule, therefore (save in cases where confidence and trust are required), are not held in such high esteem or so largely remunerated as buyers, salesmen, or travellers. They are, however, a numerous class, falling into divisions and subdivisions of varied importance. Among the lowest grades are those known as Entering Clerks, who form a large proportion of the whole class. Every house employs more or less of them, and in some cases they occupy a large space in the machinery of calculation. Of all those whose lot it is to be "nailed to the desk's dead wood" theirs is perhaps the least enviable. Monotonous in its character, and protracted in its daily duration, their work is a species of dull drudgery, and, as far as appearances go, but ill remunerated.

To understand better the men and their labours, we will enter one of the large home trade houses. Any of them will do for our purpose, for in all the work and the men are pretty much the same. The desk devoted to the entering of daily transactions and the making of invoices in accordance with them will not be found in the counting house, where the higher and more complicated results are worked, but in the neighbourhood of what is called the Entering Department. Here, grouped together in a corner, are to be seen these patient toilers of the pen. They work in pairs, one entering up the day-book, the other making out invoices to correspond with the entries. The order of proceeding runs thus: When the customers' goods are passed into the entering room, they have tickets attached containing their description, quantity, and price. These tickets, when checked, are handed to the clerks, who copy them. To perform this work all that is required is a fair, clear handwriting, and a knowledge of multiplication and addition. The former mode of calculation is not so indispensable as the latter, for, to secure accuracy and save time, ready reckoners are often provided. It will be easily conceived that work of this kind is of the most monotonous character. Perhaps in this respect no sedentary occupation can equal it. We have said, too, that the labour of it is protracted. As the invoices cannot be made out until all the goods are down from the departments, it frequently happens that the Entering Clerks are detained for hours after their fellow-workers have left business. When all the rest of the house is in darkness, it is not unusual to see their corner lighted up and their pens in full play; this part of the matter, however, is not so bad as it used to be. Time was when they often worked up to midnight, but things are managed better now; and for this they are indebted to humble workers—the lurrymen—who will not take goods away after a certain hour in the evening.

Turning from the consideration of their work to the outward aspect of the men, we may note that correspondence which may be traced in all occupations. Those who are interested in the study of the philosophy of clothes, may find food for reflection here. Charles Lamb's description of "the good clerk" may be taken as a fair one in the case of those we are considering. "His dress is plain without singularity, with no other ornament than the pen which is the badge of his function stuck behind the dexter ear, and this rather for the convenience of having it at hand when he hath been called away from his desk, and expecteth to resume his seat there again shortly, than from any delight which he taketh in foppery or ostentation. The colour of his clothes is generally noted to be black rather than brown, brown rather than blue or green. His whole deportment is staid, modest, and civil." To this may be added that the garb of the entering clerk often bears painful evidence of an attempt to keep up a genteel appearance on slender means. In the facial expression, too, as well as in dress, we may trace the effects of the occupation. There is usually a patient, apathetic, subdued look, and an absence of healthy enthusiasm and vitality in the lack lustre eye. This is not difficult to understand. Figures at best are dry and uninteresting, and one might almost as reasonably expect to get sunbeams out of cucumbers, as anything of interest or excitement out of such chronicles and calculations as belong to the entering clerks' duty. Double entry may have its charms, though somebody has said that it is a device of the devil to find work for clerks, but when the calculations are confined to the placing down in order of the number of yards and pieces, their prices, and the sum total of them in extensions and additions, the case becomes bad indeed. No wonder the habits of entering clerks often show a tendency to a reaction from this monotony. It would be extremely unfair to charge a class with the failings of some of its members, but it is beyond question that there is often to be found among clerks of this kind a disposition to resort to an excessive use of stimulants. We have heard of one who avowed that he desired nothing better during his holiday vacation than to lie in bed during the time, with unlimited tobacco at hand, and in close proximity to a barrel of beer. But this gentleman must in no wise be taken as a type of his class. It is, however, a matter of extreme difficulty (as some employers find to their cost) to get a team of thoroughly steady entering clerks. This reaction from monotony displays itself, too, in a love of change. Many of them are rolling stones, who move about from desk to desk, sometimes going the round of the trade. Unstable as water, such ones rarely excel. And yet among the unsteady ones of this kind it is not unusual to meet with one of exceptional ability. In their social habits entering clerks are not usually thrifty, yet this is no grave charge, since out of their limited wages it would be well nigh impossible to save much. The most that the prudent among them can do is to become members of the Warehousemen and Clerks' Provident Society, which is almost the only refuge open to them in case of need.

With regard to the remuneration for the work, though the clerks themselves declare they are ill paid, it must be admitted, as Sir Roger de Coverley says, that "there is much to be said on both sides." Work of this kind once commanded handsome salaries for those engaged in it, but this was because those so engaged were more limited in number. It is a law of political economy which is undeviating in its results, that the wages to be obtained in any employment are in proportion to the wage fund and the number of labourers among whom it is to be divided. Though the lists of entering clerks may be full, yet there are multitudes without who are looking anxiously for the chance of a vacancy. Advertize to-morrow for an entering clerk and you will get more replies than you will care to entertain. The fact is, the spread of education has fitted an almost unlimited number for the performance of what cannot with any truth be called skilled labour. There is always in such cases as this a tendency of wages to a minimum, and it is therefore no matter for surprise that, where the supply is so great, the price of the labour should fall. In all departments in which clerks are employed, it is daily becoming apparent that only to those who can rise above mere routine and detail, who can grasp results, who can direct large operations, who are available in any emergency, is anything like generous remuneration afforded. A clerk who wishes to be successful should, therefore, educate himself to this end, otherwise his life will be passed in the shallows. The only chance an entering clerk has is to emancipate himself from the position in which he is by rising above the drudgery of routine. If he cannot do this, and must remain an entering clerk, he may solace himself with the reflection that there is no position in life, however humble, which may not be ennobled by a rigid performance of the duties which belong to it.

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WOMEN'S TREATMENT OF WOMEN

MR. John Morley publishes, in the current number of the *Fortnightly Review*, a short letter which appears to have been addressed to the Ladies' Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Acts, and which explains why he was unable to comply with a request to join the supporters of that society. We quote from the letter the following powerful passage on domestic service and the treatment of women by women in England:—

I believe there is no more effective cause of the misconduct of vicious women in this country than the misconduct of virtuous ones. For one thing, English ladies are conspicuous over all the world for the sour, merciless, and indiscriminating austerity with which they repulse the efforts of a woman who has once gone wrong to set herself socially right again. In the second place, English households of the middle and upper classes, and for this the mistresses are mainly responsible, are conspicuous for the barrier of cold, harsh, and emphatically inhuman reserve which cuts off anything like that friendly, considerate, sympathetic intercourse which ought to mark every family relation. The truth is that domestic service is not counted a family relation. We are not ashamed to have human beings in the kitchen on much the same footing as the horse in the stable and the dog in the kennel, only they are as horses and dogs with cooking and other two-handed qualities. If it is demoralising to masters and mistresses, and especially to the young of a house, to have constantly by their side and under the same roof, persons to whom they recognise no obligation beyond those of payment of a small wage and the use, not by any means invariable, of a certain frigid politeness of speech, what can we say of the effect in the mind of the servant—who after all must be a human being or else she would get no wages—of a life which is physically laborious, and in which the labour is relieved by no friendly and gracious recognition? Has no member of the Association ever seen the stout son of the house lounging over the newspaper, while the housemaid is toiling up two or three flights of stairs with heavy burdens? And the mistress haggling over a couple of pounds increase of a servant's wages one hour, and squandering fifty in personal finery the next? So long as these things are, so long as service is interpreted in this brutal sense, and relegated to a caste, instead of being performed by the members of the family, either born or informally received in some sort into it, so long there will be many women in a dense population who will deliberately prefer prostitution as a trade, without trying domestic service whose conditions they know by hearsay, and many others who will drift into it after trying this service and finding it as cheerless a life as life can be. And how many recruits does this doleful host receive from the great band of seamstresses? For eleven hours close work, often fourteen in spite of dressmakers and of the inspector, a girl well-paid receives eighteenpence, more or less. So long as this goes on, it is morally impossible for prostitution to be other than a necessity. And on the whole, it is perhaps not so very much more degrading and soul-destroying and fundamentally immoral, to wear away a life in pandering to the coarse appetite of one sex than in pandering to the ignoble and monstrous vanity of the other. You speak of the "practical contempt for womanhood" displayed by the legislature in these Acts. This practical contempt for womanhood may be seen every hour of every day in its supreme form in the leaden inconsiderateness of nine ladies out of ten for their dressmakers, domestic servants, nurses, and dependents generally.

WHO SHALL MAKE THE TRAMWAYS?

[FROM THE "DAILY NEWS."]

Now that public opinion has finally decided that tramways shall be made, the question is being raised—who shall make them? The surveyor of the parish of St. Pancras urges the parochial authorities to lay down Tramways themselves, and to let the Companies merely provide for the traffic. Other suggestions contemplate not only the making but the working of the tramways by municipal authority. The argument in favour of these suggestions is, that it is undesirable to admit any independent body to have power over the streets, that, in fact, the public streets should be kept exclusively in the hands of the public authorities. Unfortunately, the streets are even now in the hands of companies who are not interested in keeping them in order; and it may be said for the Tramway Companies that their use of the streets would depend on their being in good condition. In most of our London streets it would be a good thing to have an energetic company keeping the Gas and Water Companies on their good behaviour. The local authorities repair the road, and soon after it is done the Gas Company props it up to mend an escape in its mains, and leaves a permanent injury on the new surface. A month after the Gas Company comes the Water Company and makes a ditch, fills it up badly, and leaves a line of damage all along the road. Now, to the Tramway Companies a good road will be essential. They will not only keep in order at their own expense the part over which their own carriages run; but will put a check on those other companies who are the natural enemies of paved streets. Nor is anything to be gained by making parochial and municipal authorities do the work which has always been entrusted to companies. In the supply of gas and water these can do well; these are matters in which there is no competition, and matters of prime necessity. But Tramways compete with 'buses, and cabs, and railways, and it would not be fair that this competition should be undertaken by parochial authorities. Our custom has been to leave such matters in private hands, and there is no reason whatever for departing from it in the case of Tramways.

A HINT TO HOUSEWIVES.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SPHINX.

SIR,—In the article "What to eat, and how to cook it," mention is made of the smell caused by pouring down drains the water used for the boiling of cabbage or greens. To avoid this nuisance, put the cabbage water in a bucket, then add one table-spoonful of ammonia, and the smell will instantly disappear. Or pour the ammonia down the drain or slop-stone, and the same effect will follow.—Yours respectfully,

JOHN HIGGINBOTTOM.

Hyde Road Paper Works, Feb. 27, 1870.

THE UNCO RIGHTEOUS.—The late Dr. Risk, of Dalserf, being one of the moderators, did not satisfy, by his preaching, the Calvinistic portion of his flock. "Why, sir," said they, "we think you dinna tell us enough about renouncing our ain righteousness."—"Renouncing your ain righteousness!" vociferated the astonished doctor, "I never saw any ye had to renounce!"

THE HANGING JUDGE.—Councillor Grady, on a trial in Ireland, said he recollected to have heard of a relentless judge; he was known by the name of "The hanging judge," and was never seen to shed a tear but once, and that was during the representation of *The Beggar's Opera*, when Macheath got a reprieve. This was the same judge between whom and Curran the following pass of wit once took place at table. "Pray, Mr. Curran," said the judge, "is that hung beef beside you? if it is, I will try it."—"If you try it, my lord," replied Curran, "it is sure to be hung."

THE KEMBLES AND THE IRISHMAN.—John Kemble and his brother Charles were sitting one night in the pit of Covent Garden Theatre, listening to a play. Charles remarked to his brother in the course of the evening, "I really think this is the best play for representation that Shakespere ever wrote." No sooner had he made this remark than a huge, red-headed, broad-shouldered Irishman, who sat immediately behind him, leant forward and tapped him on the shoulder to secure his attention: "I think, sir," he observed, with a strong brogue, "ye said that it was one Shakespere that wraught that play. It was not Shakespere, sir, but me friend Linnard M'Nally, what wraught that play." "O, sir!" replied Charles Kemble, coolly, "very well." A short time after this the Irishman tapped him on the shoulder again, "Do you belave, sir, it was me friend, Linnard M'Nally, what wraught that play?"—"O yes, certainly, sir, if you say so," was the peaceable answer. For a while they remained unmolested; but at last he felt the heavy finger once more upon him: "your friend that sits on your left hand," exclaimed the Irishman, "don't look as if he belaved it was not me friend, Linnard M'Nally, what wraught that play!" This was too much for the brothers; they rose together and left the house, not deeming it either pleasant or safe to stay in such belligerent society.

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BAD BEER.

(From the Lancet.)

ATTENTION has been called in Liverpool to the adulteration of beer as a presumed cause of *delirium tremens*, of furious intoxication, and of insanity. We do not know upon what evidence the indictment rests, as far as the above particulars are concerned, but there can be no doubt that the beer supplied to public-houses of the lower class is "doctored" to an extent that makes it simply a narcotic poison. We have been assured by a brewer, holding many small public-houses, that any good and wholesome beer sent to them would be at once returned upon his hands. The consumers like to feel muddled by what they drink, and to procure this luxury at a small outlay. Labourers refuse to go to this or that house, saying that they had a pint there last week, and "felt nothing of it;" whereas they had a pint at such another one, and could scarcely get home. Verily, the labouring man is in an evil case. His supposed friends, the teetotallers, will not begin their reform at the beginning, by supplying him with wholesome water. They prefer to spout on platforms; and, if they practice what they preach, they can buy filters for themselves. His supposed political friends connive at the poisoning of his beer as a custom essential to free trade. And, lastly, there has come into existence a class of persons called "brewers' druggists"—all honourable men—who mix and sell the various ingredients by which beer is adapted to the tastes of the beershop frequenters. Were it not for their kindly interposition, some brewers might hold their hands for fear of going too far. As it is, they can buy, in a form ready for immediate use, the exact quantity of poison per gallon that can be put into their vats without fear of a coroner's inquest.

THE PERIL OF LITHOGRAPHED SERMONS.—The following are illustrations of the perils attendant on the practice of using manuscript sermons, and the still more reprehensible practice of preaching printed ones, without candid avowal of their source:—A curious illustration of this subject once presented itself to me in one of our western villages. The rector and the curate had been absent for some time, but they were efficiently represented while they were away. They returned to resume duty on the same day. The curate took the morning service, while the rector officiated for a friend in the neighbouring parish; but the rector was present in the evening to preach after the curate had read prayers. The sermon in the morning was so good that the members of the congregation congratulated themselves on the effects which change of air had had on the preacher's style and powers generally. When the rector ascended the pulpit in the evening they hoped that a judicious holiday-time had had the same effect upon him, and they felt they would be the better able to judge when they heard him give out the same text which had formed the subject of the curate's illustration in the forenoon. Very soon, however, they found that it was not only the same text, but the same sermon; and then the faces of the congregation assumed a variety of expression that might have defied Herr Schultze himself to represent. There was but one placid countenance in the whole church, and that was the preacher's, who went on, quite unconscious of the day's history and its consequences. There was but one face beside that did not bear upon it an expression of fun, or comic surprise, or a laughable perplexity and puzzlement, and that was the curate's. He, good man, looked the more concerned and abashed as he tried to look otherwise; the more he strove to assume a guise of indifference the more intensely horrified he grew. In short, the two worthy personages had, unknown to each other, purchased a dozen or so of lithographed manuscript sermons, and they had had the ill luck, without communication with each other, to select the same sermon wherewith to inaugurate their return to the old pasture.—*Dr. Doran's Saints and Sinners.*

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

RECEIVED.—C. S.; Phono; J. H. (declined, with thanks); Harry (try again); W.; S. A.

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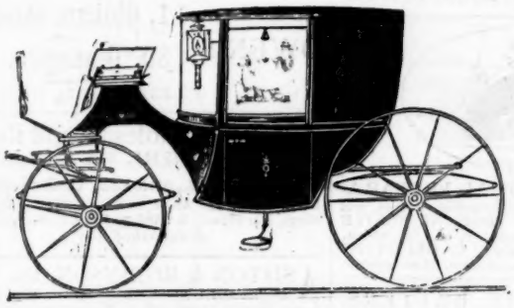

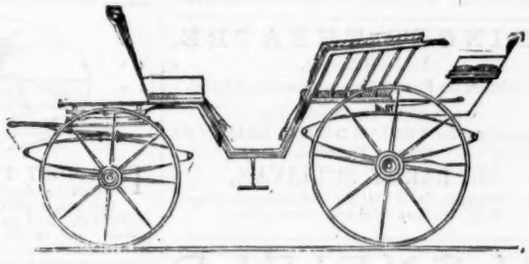

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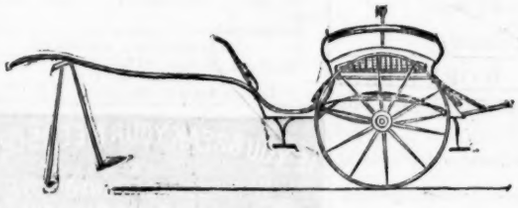

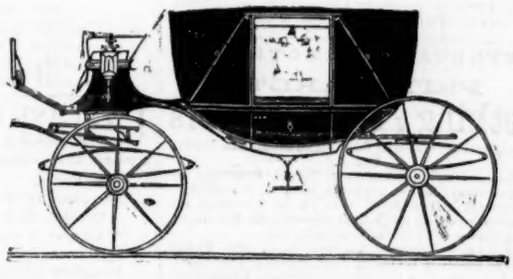

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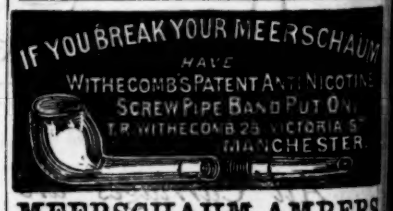

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